




# divine healing

R. A. TORREY



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Does God Perform Miracles Today?

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## INTRODUCTION

**I** KNOW of no book on the topic of Divine Healing that goes thoroughly into the subject and gives all sides of the truth in their scriptural proportions. Some see only those passages that emphasise God's ability and readiness to heal our diseases and what He has done to make such healing possible today; others are entirely occupied with those passages that make it clear that God sometimes does not heal or that God has different ways of working in different dispensations. A book is greatly needed that considers with utter impartiality all that God has to say on this subject and that has but one aim, to discover exactly what God teaches on this very important subject, and all He teaches.

We have not gone into a consideration of such weird, fantastic and—to a careful Bible scholar—ludicrously impossible and really blasphemous interpretations as that

the bread in the Lord's Supper is for the healing of the body, and the wine for the healing of the soul. Time would fail us to chase to their lair and decapitate all the monstrous vagaries that have haunted the overwrought imaginations of persons who have become so occupied with the thought of Divine Healing that they fancied they saw it everywhere.

There is an especial need of a dependable book on Divine Healing at this particular time. Everywhere there is a most extraordinary interest in the subject. People are flocking by the thousands and tens of thousands in different cities to adventurers and adventuresses who oftentimes not only rob them of their gold but of that which is far more precious than gold. And not a few evangelists who have lost out in legitimate soul-winning work are putting to the front the matter of the healing of the body, and are certainly drawing much larger crowds and receiving far larger pay than they ever did before. There have been, to my personal knowledge, some very sad tragedies,

insanity, death and shipwreck of faith arising from this pitiable business. Unfortunate women who have been lured, misled and robbed by plausible male adventurers of this sort, have poured their bitter cry into my ears; and I have seen impressionable men lured by women who have a personality that is attractive to a certain class of men, into folly and uselessness.

Let us see just what God's Word says. This book is entirely the result of a careful and thorough study of God's Word on this subject carried on for at least thirty-seven years. The clear teaching of God's Word has been corroborated by thirty-five years or more of experience in my own body, and observation of the bodies of others. I know God performs miracles of healing today.

R. A. T.

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“Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him.” (James 5: 14, 15.)

“And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with demons; and He cast out the spirits with a word, *and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled* which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.” (Matt. 8: 16-17.)

“Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness *whereof he died.*” (2 Kings 13: 14.)

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## DIVINE HEALING

**O**UR subject is **DIVINE HEALING**. Let me begin with three passages of Scripture that will be the basis of most that I shall say. The first is James 5: 14, 15: "Is any among you sick? let him call for *the elders* of the church; and *let them pray* over him, *anointing him with oil* in the name of the Lord: and *the prayer* OF FAITH shall save him that is sick, and *the Lord shall raise him up*; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him."

The second is Matt. 8: 16, 17: "And when even was come, they brought unto Him many possessed with demons; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and *bare our diseases*." The third is 2 Kings 13: 14: "Now *Elisha was fallen sick* of his sickness *whereof he died*."

The subject of Divine Healing is awakening an unusual interest in all parts of our country at the present time. Much is being said in favour of it, even by persons who have been opposed to the doctrine in times past; much is being said against it on every hand. The land is being flooded with religious adventurers who are taking advantage of the widespread interest in this important subject to deceive and rob the people.

We shall try to find what the Bible has to say on this subject, and exactly what it teaches. If there is much error being taught on the subject of Divine Healing, and there is, the best way to meet it is not by being silent on the subject, but by going right to the Book of God and seeing exactly what it has to say on the subject, and all it has to say. And the Bible has a great deal to say on the subject, and what it has to say is very plain; and I believe it because God says it, and I believe it because I have put it to the test by personal experiment and found it true in my own experience,



an experience covering more than forty years.

### I. JAMES 5: 14, 15

Let us look first at James 5: 14, 15. We look at this first not only because it is the passage most frequently referred to, but because it is one of the clearest, plainest, fullest and most explicit passages in the Bible on this subject. Indeed its meaning is so clear as to be well nigh unmistakable, if one will pay careful attention to just what it says. Let me again quote the verses, "Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him."

Note in the first place, that *we have here very explicit directions as to what a believer is to do when he is sick*, (not every time he has a headache or a little pain of some kind, but when he is really

sick). The Greek word rendered "sick" means literally "*without strength*," but it, with its derivatives, is used of sickness over and over again in the New Testament. However, it stands for very serious sickness that deprives one of his strength. The implication of the context here is of one so sick that he cannot get out, but must send for the elders to come to him. What is he to do? "*Let him call* for (literally, call to him) the elders of the church." It does not say for those who make a hobby of Divine Healing to go without invitation to see him and insist upon his accepting Divine Healing and reproaching him if he does not. No, *the sick man must take the initiative, the sending begins with him*. Note also for whom he is to send, "the elders of the church." He is not to send for some self-appointed busy-body who goes about with a little bottle of oil to be used in his loudly-advertised "ministry of healing" to which he has been called, or fancies he has been called. He is not to send for some woman who is peculiarly gifted in



prayer, or who thinks she is, and who has a peculiarly psychological or magnetic or hypnotic personality. He is not to send for any man or woman or group of such. No, he is to "call for *the elders*," the word is always masculine. He is not to "attend meetings for three days" (or three hours, or three minutes) to get under the spell of psychological influences, that are akin to Couéistic auto-suggestively therapeutic influences. He is not to be brought into the mesmeric atmosphere of a meeting where there is skilfully-planned, highly-emotional music and swaying of the body and passings of the hand and shouts of hallelujahs, that excite the imagination and thrill the body. No, he is to "call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him" in the calm and quiet of the home, and "*the prayer*" of (Spirit-given) *faith* is to "save him that is sick," and not *intense carnal excitement* temporarily *galvanize* him into brief activities, from which there is an appalling reaction, often leaving the poor victim of the religious charlatan worse

than ever, and not infrequently sending him to the insane asylum or the cemetery.\*

Note, in the second place, what the elders are to do. They are "*to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord,*" or more exactly rendered, they are to "pray over him, *having anointed* him with oil in the name of the Lord." The anointing with oil comes first and then the prayer; anointing precedes the prayer.

(1) What is the meaning and purpose of the anointing with oil? Many tell us that anointing with oil was a common and practically the only medical practice known in those days, and the anointing with oil was a rubbing the man with healing oil. In other words the elders were to use the best medical skill that they

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\* The writer knows personally of some heart-breaking incidents of this kind under two of the most widely advertised healers of the present day, who have been drawing thousands to their weird and hypnotic gatherings. Listening to the story of a friend, a broken-hearted sister, whose brother, a consecrated Baptist minister, had been lured to these meetings and had been "healed," and whose healing had been loudly heralded, but who died in a sanitarium a few days later, a raving maniac, was one of the factors that led to the publishing of this book.

had and then pray. But in what these would-be expositors of the Word say they draw entirely on their imagination for their history. There was a very extensive system of doctoring known and practiced in that day, and moreover the Greek word translated "anointing" (or in the more accurate translation, "having anointed") is the word used in the Septuagint of Jacob's anointing the pillar with oil, which he did by *pouring oil upon it*. (See Gen. 31:13. Cf. Gen. 28:18).

What, then, does the anointing mean? Turn to Lev. 8:10-12, and you get God's answer to the question. "And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and *sanctified them*," that is, he *set them apart for God*. The anointing was an act of dedication or consecration. "He sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, and the laver and its base, *to sanctify them*. And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him *to sanctify him*." It is very

evident from these verses, and would be equally evident from many others if we had time to quote them, that anointing "with oil in the name of the Lord" was an act of dedication and consecration, implying on the part of the one anointed a full surrender to God of his hands to work for Him and for Him alone, of his feet to walk for Him and Him alone, his eyes to see, his lips to speak, his ears to hear for Him and for Him alone, and his whole body to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. And the oil itself was a symbol of the Holy Spirit in His healing power. (Compare Acts 10:38). The Holy Spirit is the One who does the healing, if it really is *Divine* healing. In Rom. 8:11 we read, "But if *the Spirit* of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead *shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit* that dwelleth in you." Now that refers, as the text itself and the context (vs. 20-23) clearly prove, to the future resurrection of our body by the Holy Spirit, and not to our

present healing, but, nevertheless, *it shows the quickening, i. e., life-giving, power of the Holy Spirit in our physical bodies.*

(2) *Having anointed the sick man with oil, the elders were to do a second thing, "pray over him," pray for his physical healing.* It is said by some that the Epistle of James was written to Jewish believers, and therefore it does not apply to Gentile believers. But God in His Word very definitely tells us that what applies to Jewish *believers* applies to Gentile *believers*, that "*in Christ Jesus*" "*there can be neither Jew nor Greek*" (Gal. 3: 28). This splitting up of the New Testament and giving one part to Gentile Christians and another part to Jewish Christians, has absolutely no warrant in the Word of God, in fact is against its plain teaching. There are some who would take away from us Gentiles pretty much all of the New Testament except the later Epistles of Paul, but they are riding a hobby for which there is no warrant whatever in the Bible itself. They are not "*rightly dividing*

the Word," they are *mutilating* the Word, and stealing from the greater part of God's children what really belongs to them.

Note, in the third place, *what the result of the prayer will be when the anointing has been real and the person prayed for has really made a full surrender of himself to God.* "*The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick.*" Does this teach that everyone anointed and for whom the elders pray will get well? It means just what it says, and notice just what it really does say, "*The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick.*" In many instances the elders may not be given faith. Are they to blame for not having faith? Not necessarily. Is the sick one to blame for not having faith? Not necessarily. It is not always the will of God to heal His sick children, even some of the ripest saints, when they are sick. The fanatical teaching so common today, that, if any child of God is sick, it is conclusive proof that he has sinned, or is out of communion with God in some way, is utterly un-Scriptural,

indeed it is plainly anti-Scriptural. In 2 Kings 13:14 we read, "Elisha was fallen sick of the sickness *whereof he died.*" Was Elisha, then, out of communion with God at this time? Read the story for yourself, and you will find that he was in particularly intimate communion with God at that very time, and that on that dying bed he made one of the most remarkable prophecies of his entire life and that he was speaking as the especially chosen mouth-piece of God, even while "sick of the sickness *whereof he died.*"

*Paul left Trophimus at Miletus sick* (2 Tim. 4:20). Paul seemed to need his companionship and Paul was a mighty man of prayer, but his prayer had not availed as yet to raise Trophimus up. In Phil. 2:27 we read that Epaphroditus "was *sick nigh unto death.*" Had Epaphroditus sinned or gotten out of communion with God? And was it because of his sin that he was so sick? No, we are distinctly told in the immediate context that *it was because of his devotion to the work of Christ* that he "*came nigh unto death.*"



(Phil. 2: 30.) Epaphroditus was healed in time in answer to Paul's prayer, but his sickness was not because of sin or because he was out of communion with God, and he was not healed immediately, as all who came to Jesus when He was here on earth were. We see, then, that oftentimes the lack of faith is not from any fault of the elders nor from any fault of the sick one, but because of the will of God that in this particular instance (for some good reason known to Himself, and that He does not see fit to reveal to us) the sick one should not be healed.

In many instances, however, the lack of faith is the fault of the praying elders or the fault of the sick man. In the latter instance there is some unjudged sin or some lesson that the sick one has not as yet learned. *The antecedent probability in any given case is in favour of healing; for health is the general will of God for His people.* But one may need a "stake in the flesh," "a messenger of Satan," just as the apostle Paul needed it, to keep him humble. In such cases no amount of



praying, nor of anointing either for that matter, will bring healing. In such a case the physical infirmity, the "stake in the flesh," is indeed the "messenger of Satan" (sickness belongs to Satan's realm); nevertheless it is allowed by God, it is His gift, with the gracious purpose of keeping the sick one humble in the midst of many revelations. (Study carefully the entire passage, 2 Cor. 12: 7-9). But healing is to be expected. Paul himself expected healing in his own case *until God definitely revealed it to him that it was not His will in that particular instance.*

How often God has given to me faith as I have prayed for some sick one, and healing immediate, complete and wonderful has followed. When I was Superintendent of City Missions in Minneapolis, I found on my desk one day a request to go to a home three miles distant. The people were unknown to me. Upon reaching the home I learned that they were French, and had been Roman Catholics, but the husband and wife had been

converted, though many of their relatives were still Roman Catholics. I learned that the woman had been sick for four years and had had nine different physicians, none of whom could help her. She was helpless. She could move her hands, but she had to be lifted upon a sheet when they made the bed. I sat down by the sick-bed and asked the woman what she wished me to do. She replied that she wished me to pray that she might be healed. One of her Roman Catholic relatives, who sat by a window in the same room, said, "If she is healed we will all become Protestants." I read to the sick woman this very passage that we are expounding, James 5:14, 15. Then I asked her, "Do you believe God will heal you?" She replied that she believed that He could heal her. "But," I said, "do you believe that He will heal you?" And after reading her various promises from the Word she said she believed that He would. I then explained to her very fully the meaning of the anointing and that on her part it meant a full surrender

to God of all her physical powers. Then I knelt by her bedside and, "having anointed her with oil in the name of the Lord," I prayed that God would come in with the healing power of His Holy Spirit and restore her to perfect health then and there. As I prayed God gave me faith that He heard my prayer. I prayed "the prayer of faith," and as I arose I said to the woman, "I expect you as soon as I am gone to get up and go about your work." I went from that home with the full assurance that God had answered my prayer. The night of the day following, before I began our evening meeting, I said to one of my missionaries, "Polly, you are going to hear something tonight." I was sure someone would come down from the neighbourhood and say that the sick woman was well. And, sure enough, when the meeting was opened for testimony a neighbour of this woman arose and said that God had completely healed the woman, and that immediately after my departure she did get up, dress, and go out for a call. And the

following Sunday she was down to our services, three miles away. And she remained a strong, healthy woman as long as I remained in Minneapolis. Afterwards they went South and I lost track of her. But many years later, when I was holding meetings in Los Angeles, in a tabernacle that was erected for me by the churches of that city, down on the corner of Seventh and Los Angeles Streets, I told this story one afternoon in speaking on the subject of "Prayer." A man sprang up in the audience and said, "Mr. Torrey, that was my wife. We are living in Los Angeles now, and my wife is a well woman." They are still living in Los Angeles, and she has been a well woman from that day, about thirty-five years ago, until this day.

Take another illustration. There was an M. E. minister up in Dakota who had a child that was improperly formed. There was some defect in her backbone so that the little child was bent together and the abdomen protruded, causing constant pain, and the child could not sleep. The

parents brought the child to Minneapolis to see what specialists could do, but the specialists told them that there was no hope for the child, that they might put her in a plaster-cast so that she might live, deformed, not longer than two or three years. Though the parents were Methodists they were so desirous for the health of their child that they tried "Christian Science," but found no help in that system of error. Then the minister said to his wife, "Let us take her to brother Torrey." They brought her over to my house, a little child of about two years of age, terribly misshapen and greatly suffering. I took the child in my arms and prayed for her. God gave the necessary faith and the child was healed. Relief came immediately. That night she slept normally for the first time, even the defective part of her body was made right. Something like eighteen years later I was holding meetings in Petoskey, Mich. In one of the afternoon meetings a Methodist minister from one of the neighbouring towns came in. He got up in the meeting

and told this story, saying he was the father of that daughter and that she was completely healed and a candidate for the foreign mission field. She herself came in a few days later, a beautiful, perfectly-formed young woman. She was in our Auditorium in Los Angeles at our Sunday morning services a few weeks ago.

There is no need that I multiply instances, though I could multiply them almost without limit. The teaching of this verse is not merely the teaching of the Word of God, that of itself would be sufficient; but I know in my own personal experience that the promise of this verse holds for the present day.

(4) *Note whose faith it is that prevails and brings the healing.* Is it the faith of the sick man or the faith of "the elders" who "pray"? Read the verse again and you will see, "Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and *let them pray* over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the *prayer of faith* shall save him that is sick." As it is "the *prayer* of

faith" that saves the sick, and as it is the elders who do the praying, it is evident that it is the elders' faith, not the sick man's faith, that brings the healing. Sometimes as I have prayed God has given me clearest assurance of His will and I have known my prayer was heard.

My first experience of this kind was during my first pastorate, more than forty years ago. As far as I can recall I had never read any books on Divine healing and had never heard much of anything about it. A young man in my congregation, a dentist, was taken very sick. His father was a member of our church. I went to the home to see and talk with the young man, but he was unconscious, in the last stages of typhoid fever. One of the leading physicians of the town sat by his bedside and told me that the crisis was past and had passed the wrong way, that there was no hope whatever of his recovery. As I sat there an impulse came to me to kneel down and pray to God that He would heal the young man. I did this, and as I prayed



a great assurance came into my heart that God had heard my prayer. I arose and said to the doctor, who was a backslider, "He will get well." The doctor smiled and replied, "Well, Mr. Torrey, that is all very well from your standpoint, but he cannot get well. The crisis is past and has passed the wrong way, and he will die." I replied, "Doctor, that is all right from your standpoint, but God has heard my prayer, I know He has heard my prayer. The man will not die, he cannot die at this time, he will get well." I returned to my home. A short time afterward they came up to tell me the young man was dying, that he was doing certain things that only one dying would do. I replied to them, "He is not dying, he cannot die now, he will get well." And get well he did, and as far as I know is living still, though that was over forty years ago.

There are many who advertise great healings, and many, indeed most, of the healings do not last; and they seek to cast the blame on the one prayed for, saying it is their lack of faith. But that is not



Scriptural, as this verse clearly shows. *It is the faith of the one that prays* (not the faith of the one who is prayed for) that brings the healing, according to this promise. The kind of healing that is only temporary and dependent upon the continued faith of the one healed is not *Divine* healing, not God's healing, but it is *Faith Healing*, an *entirely* different matter, a purely psychological process, closely akin to what is called "Mind Cure," and also closely akin to "Christian Science," falsely so-called, and exactly the same as the remarkable cures of the French, auto-suggestive healer, Coué. Here lies one of the saddest and most dangerous errors of the day on this whole subject of Divine healing, substituting man's faith for God's power, substituting a mental process for the work of the Holy Spirit on the body.

The healings in these crowded, excited, jazz music crazed crowds, due to mass-psychology, and æsthetic and melodramatic mental soothing syrup, in Christian Science and other more or less closely

allied systems, engineered often by physically attractive women, possessed of unusual elocutionary, dramatic, magnetic and hypnotic gifts, are as unlike the healings of our Lord Jesus and His Apostles as San Francisco and Point Loma and Benares are unlike to Heaven.

Oftentimes those who advocate this kind of healing insist upon the one prayed for stating that he is well, even while he still has all the symptoms of the old disease. This is not much different from the method of "Christian Science," which denies the reality of sickness, saying it is only error, and declaring themselves well when they know they are sick, thus "*demonstrating their science*" by telling lies. Of course, there is a healing power of a certain kind in thus asserting that you are well, or that "day by day in every way, you are getting better and better," but it certainly is not *Divine* healing, it is self healing.

There is often a hypnotic element, which is closely akin to a demoniacal element, mixed up in that kind of "Divine"

healing. People of a psychic or hypnotic temperament, closely akin to the temperament of spiritualistic mediums, are usually the ones most largely employed in that kind of healing; and usually, if they are not awakened to their error, they sooner or later run off into some gross spiritual errors (as *e. g.* John Alexander Dowie did). There are also many sad tragedies of people unnecessarily dying and others going hopelessly insane connected with their meetings.

I remember two men who were working many years ago in Wisconsin. They emphasised "Divine healing" and marvelous cures were wrought. Wonderful things were told of the amazing cures they wrought upon the crowds that flocked to them. They claimed to do this healing in the name and power of Jesus Christ. I met the leading man of the two and had a talk with him, and was not favourably impressed, though I had been favourably impressed by what I had heard before meeting him. In the course of time their work ran off into

what was essentially spiritualism, and in a little while they disappeared from sight altogether.

Many will remember the man who created such an excitement in Denver in the nineties and was reported to have wrought such marvelous cures, and who was urged by so many cities to visit them, and who disappeared for a while and then re-appeared in Los Angeles and finally wound up in jail for gross frauds of which he was guilty.

But in spite of all these gross and God-dishonouring errors into which people fall who over-emphasise Divine Healing, and who do not carefully study the *whole* Bible, but only isolated passages, and in spite of the numerous side-tracks that so many people get switched off on to, instead of keeping the main line of preaching salvation from the guilt of sin by the atoning death of Jesus Christ, and from the power of sin by the risen Christ, let us not give up the precious truth of the texts with which we started (and of many other texts), namely, that the Gospel of

Christ has salvation for the body as well as for the soul.

It is the Church's forgetting this and not teaching this that left an opening for Mrs. Eddy and for a host of other pretenders. There are thousands today entangled in the destructive errors of Christian Science who would never have become so entangled, if they had been taught what the Bible teaches about Divine Healing; and there are not a few today who imagine that they are Christian Scientists who really are not so, for they do not know what the real teachings of Christian Science are. If they knew its blasphemous teachings regarding the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and regarding the personality of God and many other things, they would spew it out at once. They see dimly the truth of Divine Healing and think that is what Christian Science is. The best cure for error is not silence, but the proclamation of the truth. The best antidote for Christian Science is the Bible teaching about Divine Healing.

Before we leave this passage that we have been studying, let us ask the question, Is there any warrant in this passage for *public meetings* where Divine Healing is emphasised, where crowds are instructed to come to the front and where they are anointed with oil and prayed with? There certainly is not. Read again just what the passage says, "Is any among you sick? *let him call for the elders of the church*; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." There is not the faintest resemblance between what we are here told to do and what various persons are doing in all parts of our land today. The praying and healing was to be done in the quiet of the home of the sick believer. The Lord Jesus Himself never held Divine Healing meetings. He did heal many. He did heal people in crowds (because He was fulfilling prophecy as to the signs that would accompany the Messiah), but He never advertised such meetings, but rather avoided as far as He could all such public manifestations of

His healing powers. He strictly charged those whom He healed to keep still about it, lest men should make Him a mere Healer, and not what He really was, a Teacher and a Saviour of the soul. His work was greatly hindered oftentimes because those who were healed disobeyed His strict injunction that they should say nothing about the healing, and consequently people flocked to Him for healing instead of coming for the salvation that He especially came into the world to bring to men and to proclaim to men. (Luke 19: 10.) The great crowds that flocked to Him for physical healing became a positive hindrance to His work, and He withdrew into desert places. (Read carefully Mark 1: 42-45.) Not only did our Lord Jesus not hold such meetings, but neither did the Apostles hold such meetings. At times (though not nearly so frequently as when Christ Jesus Himself was here on earth, indeed at very rare intervals) there were notable manifestations of healing power in connection with the work of Peter and of



Paul. But they did not advertise it nor emphasise it. They certainly did not have themselves photographed in various dramatic attitudes of prayer beside the sick. *They scarcely mentioned it in their various Epistles.* To any one who has caught the spirit of Christ and His methods as set forth in the Gospels, and the method of the Apostles as set forth in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, the shameless advertising of themselves and of their exaggerated cures pursued by the late John Alexander Dowie and by quite a host of imitators today, is simply nauseating, and distressingly painful, and it is also utterly unscriptural, and anyone who practices it will be discredited by anyone of spiritual discernment. No wonder that on careful investigation it is found, that while there are some notable cases of real healing (as is to be naturally expected, because some few humble souls have really gotten in touch with the living Christ, in spite of so much that is so theatrical, carnal, hypnotic and utterly un-Christian in the surround-



ings), that an astoundingly large per cent. of those advertised as healed do not prove to be healed at all, or do not stay healed, and instances are not wanting where the alleged "remarkable cure" is found to be "framed up."

One case, for example, of alleged healing of cancer that was heralded in trumpet tones this last April in the magazine of a prominent healer (and also on the platform) was found, upon investigation, to be a tissue of lies, the reputable physician quoted declaring he had never said anything bearing any resemblance to what he was quoted as saying, and that the facts alleged were not true in any respect. The notice of the healing evangelist was called to the actual facts in the case, but she never corrected her false statements or paid any attention to the letter written her.

One other question of great practical importance will arise in connection with this passage, and that is: *Is sending for the elders of the church and having them pray over the sick one* ("having anointed

him with oil in the name of the Lord”) the only way in which a child of God who is sick is to find deliverance in answer to prayer? The Bible answer to that question is, *No, not by any means.* This comes out very clearly in the setting of our passage. The passage is simply giving general directions as to what should be done in the various emergencies of Christian life. In verse 13 we read, “Is any among you *suffering*? let him *pray*.” Those are the general directions as to what a suffering believer shall do, “*pray*.” Further on in verse 13 we read, “Is any *cheerful*? let him sing praise.” Those are general directions as to what a believer whose heart is filled with gladness is to do. There is no suggestion that these are the only things, in either instance, that the believer is to do. Then come the directions as to what the sick one shall do, with no suggestion whatever that this is the only thing that a sick one shall ever do in order to obtain help of the Lord. This becomes even clearer when we read the verses that follow our passage, “Confess

therefore your sins *one to another*, and pray *one for another*, that ye may be healed," etc. Here we have explicit directions for the one who is sick, not merely that he may send for the elders of the church in a case of grave extremity, but that in all his sicknesses he may call in the help of fellow-believers, confessing any sin that may lie at the root of his present illness, and have them pray for him. Then James goes on immediately to tell what the mighty power of prayer is; of course, with the application of the power of prayer to the case of the sick one principally in mind. Individual believers, *whether elders or not*, have the privilege, and the duty, to "pray *one for another*" in their sicknesses with the expectation that God will hear and heal. (Jas. 5: 16.) Of course, in this case there is no anointing with oil, or anything of that kind, but simply *confession of sin* (if there is sin to be confessed) *and prayer*.

Further still, it is the privilege of the individual believer to pray for himself in

his physical infirmities, as well as in his other troubles. Hezekiah, in his sickness, prayed for himself and God heard and answered his prayer and added fifteen years to his life (Isa. 38: 1-5), and God bids all His children to call upon Him in any day of trouble (whether of sickness or any other kind of trouble) and promises that He will deliver them and they shall glorify Him (Psa. 50: 15). The believer is never to "be anxious" in *anything*, even in the gravest sickness, but what is he to do?—"in *everything* (in sickness or any other trouble) by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving *let your requests be made known unto God*" (Phil. 4: 6). Paul in his physical infirmities did not call for the elders of the church to come and anoint him with oil, but prayed for himself (2 Cor. 12: 7-9), and while he did not get healing, because it was not God's will in this particular case, because Paul needed the "stake in the flesh" to keep him humble, nevertheless his prayer brought blessing greater than healing.

Some of the most wonderful healings on record, and some of the most wonderful healings that I have known in my own body and in the bodies of others, have been in answer to the prayers of the one who was sick, entirely without the help of others.

Let me relate carefully one instance. When I was very young, so young that I have no recollection of it, I suffered a very severe attack of scarlet fever, which left me with an infected ear. It was necessary to operate at the time, back of the ear. But for years I had a discharge from that ear. Even when I had attained to manhood it was necessary to carry absorbent cotton with me constantly and most of the time keep it in the ear. The drum was perforated, and I heard with such difficulty with that ear (the left ear) that whenever I used the telephone it was necessary to bring the ear-piece way around to the other, the sound, ear. I went to a very well-known ear specialist in Cleveland, Ohio, and found temporary relief from the discharges, but in a little

time they returned. My ear continued in this diseased condition for several years longer. While working in Minneapolis I had a severe attack of pain in the ear. I said to myself, you pray for the healing of others, why do you not ask God to heal your own ear. I at once knelt down alone in my own home and asked God to heal that ear. He healed me instantly, and for many years I had no discharge from that ear and no pain in it, the drum healed over and I can now hear well with both ears. I have told this to two ear specialists and they both asked me to let them look into my ear, which, of course, I did; and both stated that the drum was evidently once perforated and is now healed over.

Whenever a child of God is sick, he should, before he does anything else, take the matter in prayer to God for himself. If he continues sick, grievously sick, he will do well to call in the help of the chosen (not self-chosen) representatives of the church, "the elders," and have them do for him exactly as is prescribed

to be done in a case of that kind (Jas. 5: 14, 15).

## II. MATTHEW 8: 16, 17

Now let us look at another passage much dwelt on nowadays and oftentimes in the past, Matt. 8: 16, 17, "And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with demons, and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.*" It is often said that this verse teaches that the atoning death of Jesus Christ avails for our sicknesses as well as for our sins; or, in other words, that "physical healing is in the atonement." I think that that is a fair inference from these verses when looked at in their context. "Well, that being the case," many say, "every believer has a right to claim physical healing for all their physical sicknesses and infirmities right now, *just as much as a right to claim immediate pardon for all their sins,*



*on the ground of the atoning death of Jesus Christ."* But that does not follow. It is very poor logic. For the question arises, *When* do we get what Jesus Christ secured for us by His atoning sacrifice? The Bible answer to that question is very plain, and the Bible answer is, *when Jesus Christ comes again*. We get *the first fruits* of the atoning work of Christ, the first fruits of *salvation* in the life that now is, *but we get the full fruits only when Jesus Christ comes again*. Romans 8: 18-23 makes that as plain as day, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. And not only so, but ourselves also, *which have the first fruits* of the



Spirit, *even we* ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting for* our adoption, to-wit, *the redemption of our body.*" The atoning death of Jesus Christ secured for us not only physical healing, but the resurrection and perfecting and glorifying of our bodies. Can we therefore have the resurrection of our bodies right now? And have we a right to claim *that* now, because it was secured by the atonement, just as we claim forgiveness of all our sins now? Paul says in 2 Tim. 2: 16-18, that those who so teach have erred concerning the truth and are teaching destructive error whereby they "overthrow the faith of some." Let me quote Paul's exact words, "But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenæus and Phil-etus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." No, *we do not get the full measure of what Jesus secured for us by His atoning death on the Cross in the present*

*life, but at His Coming Again.* It is at the Coming of our Lord that "our spirit and soul and body" are to "be preserved entire" (I Thess. 5:23 R. V.). When He comes again there will not only be wonderful manifestations of healing power among the people then living upon the earth, but we who have believed in Him before that, will have *not merely perfect physical healing* but a resurrection body, a glorified and perfected body, which was secured for us when He bore our sicknesses as well as our sins on the Cross of Calvary. I have had in the past many friends who have believed and taught this extreme doctrine regarding healing being included in the atonement. Most of these friends are now dead.

But while we do not get the full benefits for the body secured for us by the atoning death of Christ in the life that now is, but when Jesus Comes Again, nevertheless, just as one gets the first fruits of his spiritual salvation in the life that now is, so we get the first fruits of our physical salvation in the life that now is. We do

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get in many, many, many cases physical healing through the atoning death of Jesus Christ even in the life that now is.

### III. IS THE USE OF MEANS WRONG?

Now there arises a question of great practical importance. Is the use of all medical or other therapeutic means wrong for one who believes in Divine Healing? Sometimes it is, sometimes it is not. Sometimes if you go to God in prayer for the healing of self or of others and then use means, when the healing comes the medicine or the doctor gets all the glory and God none.

I met a lady in Chicago week before last who was a member of our church when I lived there. She had a child that was very ill with the measles, which was followed by meningitis. The doctor said to her, "Mrs. D., your child cannot live. I have done all that I can do." She sent for me to come and pray with the child. I was away, so my colleague in the church, Wm. S. Jacoby, was summoned. He took with him one of my colleagues

at the Institute. When I returned that night Mr. Jacoby called at my home and said, "Brother Torrey, if ever I had an answer to my prayer in my life I had to-day when I prayed for the little D. boy." There was immediately a great improvement. The next morning the Doctor called again and exclaimed to the mother, "Why, what a remarkable improvement in the child. What did you do?" Mrs. D. told him what she had done. "Well," he said, "I will give him some more medicine." "No," said the mother, "you will not. You told me you had done all you could for the child. We took him to God in prayer and He has healed him, and you are not going to get the credit for the cure." The following Sunday morning, Mr. and Mrs. D. were present at the church service. The child would have been there too, for he was now well; but it was such a stormy morning they thought it best to leave him at home. Now in a case like that, and in many other cases, the use of medicine would have been wrong.

But does it follow that it is always

wrong? It certainly does not. Most of the cures in the Bible were without other means than prayer, but it was not always the case. God told Isaiah to go to Hezekiah in his sore sickness and say to him, "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years." (Isa. 38: 4, 5.) But in verse twenty-one of the same chapter we read that Isaiah said, "*Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.*"

Our Lord Jesus Himself occasionally used means in connection with His cures. He used clay and spittle for eyes that could not see. And Paul, writing by inspiration, bade Timothy to "be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." (1 Tim. 5: 23.) The one great trouble on this subject of Divine Healing, as on so many other subjects, is that people only consider *some* of the passages on one side of the question, instead

of taking in the whole scope of God's Word.

It is quite possible for one to fall into legalism and bondage on the whole subject of the use of means in connection with sickness. Some people get positively morbid. More than one person has come to me in fear that they had committed the unpardonable sin, because, having taken Jesus Christ as their healer, they had afterward used something that looked like means to procure a cure. Such an attitude is totally unscriptural. And many excellent Christian people are dead (and many of their children are dead) who might now be alive, if they had not gone beyond what is written in the Book of God in regard to the use of means, and thus let themselves or their children die rather than resort to the use of the rational means that would have saved their own lives or the lives of their children. There have been many sad tragedies along this line, and they have served to bring the Bible truth of Divine Healing into great disrepute.

Personally, I do not have much confidence in medicine anyhow. I am sure that many of the Christian Science cures are due to the people being induced to give up doping themselves with all sorts of drugs and nostrums that were making them chronic invalids. But to say that any use of drugs, or other therapeutic means, is sin, or an act of unbelief, is entirely unscriptural. In the last thirty-five years I have known of many who took that ground. Most of them are now in the cemetery, and many of those who still live are chronic invalids, while talking constantly of Divine Healing and of the wickedness of using medicine.

It certainly does not honour God to refuse all remedies and get steadily worse and at the same time to say you are trusting God for healing. And many die doing it and bring great reproach upon God and upon Christianity and upon the great truth of Divine Healing.

But these are entirely secondary questions. The main question is: Does God heal in answer to prayer today? Does



He really heal people who are beyond the skill of the physician and beyond all human help? Does He work miracles today? To all these questions I unhesitatingly reply, He does. Not only does the Bible teach it, but experience demonstrates it. There is a vast deal of religious charlatanism in connection with these much self-advertised Divine Healers, "miracle men" and "miracle women," and many of the so-called cures are framed up, and many of them do not last,—and many of them never occurred, the one who was alleged to be healed was not healed; but, in spite of all that, here is the plain teaching of God's Word, and furthermore, I could write by the hour and tell of things I have seen with my own eyes and experienced in my own body and tested by years of trial afterward.

Why, then, do I not go into the business of healing the sick? I am confident that I could soon draw tens of thousands to hear me, in the hope of obtaining physical health or of seeing some new wonder. Why do I not do it? Two reasons: First, It is not Scriptural, and that of itself

would be decisive; Secondly, I have far more important business to do. I would rather be used to save one lost soul than to heal a thousand sick bodies. Don't send for me to come and pray with some sick man. I won't go. I have not time. I would have to leave far more important work to do it. It is not the work to which God has called me. I have immeasurably more important business to attend to. Alas! There are one hundred persons who will seek healing for some sick friend for every one person who will seek salvation for some lost friend!

One of the appalling features of our modern religious life is the way in which people are absorbed in the matter of physical healing. They will do anything to get healing. They will throw overboard the precious faith of years, and run frantically to "Christian Science" or "Mind Cure" or "New Thought" or any other damning system of error because they hope that in it they may find deliverance from some annoying physical infirmity. Human nature is just the same today as when our Lord was on the earth. Multi-

tudes, unnumbered multitudes, crowded about Him, journeying many, many miles to see Him, in the hope of getting healing for their bodies, but very, very few were eager for the salvation of their souls. Let us not go with the unspiritual and really immoral rabble in this matter. Let us refuse to be side-tracked. Let us keep on the main line of preaching Christ Jesus, *a Saviour from sin*. That was God's promise through the angel concerning Him, "thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people *from their sins*" (Matt. 1:21), not from their sicknesses, but "from their sins." Let us, then, as we have said, keep on the main line of preaching Christ Jesus once crucified and thus making full atonement for sin, Christ Jesus now risen and "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him" (Heb. 7:25), Christ Jesus *coming again* some day *as the Saviour of our bodies*, to "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:20, 21).





















# divine healing

BY R. A. TORREY

This book goes into the topic of divine healing, and gives all sides of the truth as R. A. Torrey saw it in Scripture. Some see only those passages that emphasize God's ability and readiness to heal our diseases and what He has done to make such healings possible today. Others are entirely occupied with those passages that make it clear that God sometimes does not heal and that God has different ways of working in different dispensations. The author seeks to determine and make clear to the reader exactly what God teaches on this important subject.

R. A. Torrey was well qualified to write this book. In his ministry of more than twenty years and as superintendent of Moody Bible Institute he frequently encountered those who were confused on the subject of divine healing. To help them and to come to clarity of thinking and conviction he set himself to a systematic and thorough study of what the Scriptures say on this topic. This book is the result. It will also help to clarify one's thinking on the current discussions on divine healing, and will enable readers to help others reach peace of mind.

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